NEW BEDFORD REMINISCENCE IN PICTURES

THE ROTCH MANSION

Being a Reproduction of the Illustrations of a Certain Series of Calendars of Reminiscence Published by The Morning Mercury.

MOONLIGHT ON THE ACUSHNET.

CORNER OF UNION AND PURCHASE STREETS IN 1820.

The street running through the centre of the picture is Purchase street. On the left, at the corner of Union, stood the house of William Tobey. The first post office in New Bedford was in this building. The next house on the left side of the street was that of Job Allen, the town bell ringer, and beyond was the Unitarian Church. The figure in the foreground on the right was Barnabas Russell, whose garden was on the corner. Next in order on the right were the homes of Daniel Taber and Oliver Crocker, and the "Tom" Kempton Schoolhouse, while in the distance, on the right, was the mansion of John Avery Parker, afterwards reconstructed and maintained as a hotel, the Parker House.

THE CORNER OF WATER AND WILLIAM STREETS IN 1805. FROM A PAINTING BY WILLIAM A. WALL, NOW OWNED BY MRS. J. HENRY HERRING.

The cart, in the foreground, is at the corner of Front and Hamilton streets. The hill in front is the Burial Point, where now are located Hamilton and Centre streets, the old Merchants and Mechanics Bank building and other buildings in the rear.

The building with three stacks, on the left, is Joseph Russell's oil works. At its right is Gilbert Russell's first homestead. The third building is unidentified, but is clearly intended to be on Bethel street, and may be the building erected by William Rotch for a schoolhouse. The little house at the right is unidentified. It is evidently located upon the site of the Mariners' Home. The three-story mansion in the centre of the picture was the homestead of William Rotch, Jr., and was located on the southwest corner of William and Water streets. In 1851 it was moved back, and is now the Mariners' Home. The building with the Dutch cap, at the right and rear, is on the site of, and may be, the same building now occupied by the Mercury Publishing Company, at the southeast corner of Second and William streets. The structure with the steeple, at the right, is the Congregational meeting-house, that stood on the lot now occupied by the Merchants bank, corner of Purchase and William streets. The house with trees in front was the residence of Samuel Rodman, whose wife was the sister of William Rotch, Jr. This house is now a part of the old Snell Bakery building. The roadway leading from the Rodman house eastward is the line of Rodman street. The two buildings in the front and right of the picture were on land which belonged to William Rotch, the easternmost apparently the warehouse at the corner of Rodman and Front streets. In 1832, when the excavations were made for the bank building occupied by the Merchants and Mechanics bank, there were exhumed skeletons of human bodies, which were placed in boxes, and by direction of William Rotch, Jr., buried in one of the city's cemeteries.

MANSION OF JOSEPH ROTCH.

This mansion was of brick. It was built by William Rotch, Jr., for his son Joseph. It stood on the north side of William street, between County and Eighth streets. It was built in the period of mansion building in New Bedford, between 1820 and 1850.

UNION STREET, LOOKING WEST FROM PLEASANT.

(Showing the Site of the Hutchinson and Winslow Buildings as It Appeared Forty Years Ago.

THE OLD PEARL STREET DEPOT.

DRAW OF THE OLD FAIRHAVEN BRIDGE.

THE PARKER BLOCK, WHICH STOOD AT THE FOOT OF MIDDLE STREET, FACING THE OLD BRIDGEWAY.

WILLIAM STREET, EAST OF PURCHASE, FIFTY YEARS AGO.

This print was made from a photograph taken before Acushnet avenue was cut through. Among those doing business on the south side of the street were Tobey & Coggeshall, stoves and tinware; Coggeshall & Co., undertakers; John M. Hathaway, stablekeeper; Sherman & Gifford, steam and gas fitters; Leonard B. Ellis, pictures and frames; and Samuel Bennett, crockery. The old Custom House, at the corner of Second street, is on the right. The gardens of Andrew Robeson, on the north side of the street, occupied the present site of the Robeson building.

THE GIDEON HOWLAND MANSION.

The Gideon Howland mansion at the southwest corner of South Water and School streets, was built by Gideon Howland, Jr., about the year 1795. He subsequently conveyed it to Isaac Howland, Jr., and in 1827 he devised it to Sylvia Ann Howland in whose estate it remained until December, 1904, when the property was sold by the trustees under her will and the magnificent mansion was sold at auction for $50 and demolished.

THE FIRST FRIENDS' ACADEMY.

This building, known to two generations, was built by William Rotch in 1810. It stood on the southwest corner of County and Elm streets where the County street church is now located. Leading from the gate on County street to the entrance was a walk, bounded on either side by horse chestnut trees, the yard enclosed by a high picket fence. The old building was sold to be removed in 1860 and a new school building was built. The original subscribers to the school were William Rotch $2000, William Rotch, Jr., $2000, Samuel Rodman $2000, Samuel Elam $1000, James Arnold $1000, Thomas Arnold $500. In the preamble of the charter, signed by Elbridge Gerry, governor, it was stated that the "principal design" of the patrons of the Academy was "to diffuse useful knowledge among the members of their own religious society, to guard the morals of the youth placed there for an education, and as much as may be to encourage piety and religion in their progress in literature." A preference was given such students as might be members of, or make profession with and attend the meetings of the "Society of Friends." John Maitland Brewer was the first preceptor. When Samuel Elam of Newport died in 1813 leaving the Academy his library, a committee excluded the plays of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, Rosseau's works and the novels of Fielding, Smollett and Defoe. A broader policy was adopted in 1855 and the new Academy which now stands on Morgan street, was built.

THE ANDREW ROBESON MANSION.

This estate was at the northwest corner of Second and William streets, where the Robeson Building now stands. The garden was one of the finest in New Bedford.

NEW BEDFORD'S CIVIC CENTRE SIXTY YEARS AGO.

AN OLD NEW BEDFORD LANDED PROPRIETOR.

(See next Page for Description.)

AN OLD NEW BEDFORD LANDED PROPRIETOR.

This is a reproduction of a photograph made forty or more years ago at "Woodlawn," the estate of Benjamin Rodman, on Linden Street, opposite County. When County street was extended the old house was torn down, a parochial school built near the entrance to the grounds, and the estate intersected by streets. The figure on the lawn is that of Mr. Rodman, who was prominent in the early history of the city. He was one of the incorporators of the New Bedford Institution for Savings, one of the earliest savings banks in the state, a vice-president in the New Bedford Lyceum at its organization, one of the original stockholders and officers of the Annawan Mills in Fall River, and an incorporator of Fall River's first bank. Mr. Rodman's estate was originally extensive. When the Wamsutta Mills were conceived he was asked for a price upon the land necessary for the enterprise and the valuable water privileges which he owned. He asked the projectors what they could afford to pay, and accepted their proposition. All of Mr. Rodman's dealings with the new corporation were conducted with the utmost liberality upon his part, and his assistance was recognized as very advantageous to the corporation. Mr. Rodman was once sued for a debt which he regarded as unjust, and in spite of the remonstrance of his friends, permitted himself to be imprisoned rather than yield to the demand. While in the New Bedford jail he wrote a series of letters to The Mercury, which were subsequently assembled in a pamphlet. This little publication is agreed to have been influential in bringing about the repeal of the obnoxious law which permitted imprisonment for debt. Ultimately his friends settled the claim in spite of his protest and he was released.

LIBERTY HALL BUILDING FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN 1867.

(See next page for description.)

LIBERTY HALL.

This building formerly stood at the northwest corner of Purchase and William streets. It included a theatre auditorium, which, at the time of the building, was one of the finest in New England outside of Boston. The following description of people and establishments shown was furnished to The Mercury by Benjamin Baker. Purrington & Brown occupied the north store on Purchase street, where they started their crockery business in 1865. Oliver F. Brown, one of the partners, can be seen in the picture near their entrance, standing by the movable showcase. Standing in the main entrance is Isaac Case, at that time agent for the property. In the carriage, holding the reins, is John A. Jones, who, in company with Perry Brownell, was in the stable business. On the seat, apparently reading a paper, is Nathan D. Brooks, then in Jones & Brownell's employ. Ebenezer Keene is standing on the grating, north of Davis & Gorham's Purchase street entrance, while Paul Wing stands a little to the south of the entrance. The second boy, standing next south of Mr. Wing, is William W. Allen, then employed in William C. Taber's book store, including a picture gallery and circulating library, on Purchase street, next south of William P. S. Cadwell's drug store, with an entrance on William street also. Lorenzo D. Davis and James S. Gorham, merchant tailors, under the firm name of "Davis & Gorham," occupied the corner store, including the two doors on William street, Nos. 55 and 57. Alexander W. Simmons, a lame man, who did cutting for them, can be seen in the north part of their Purchase street doorway, with cane in hand, while Mr. Gorham, one of the partners, is beside him. In their east William street entrance stands Mr. Davis, the other partner. The young man with the package under his arm in front of Davis & Gorham's corner window is Herbert B. Gardner, then a compositor in The Mercury office. To his right, with a bundle of leather, stands Daniel Murphy, who had a shoemaker's shop on Ray street. The man in the high hat was a German cigar-maker who worked for Charles Oesting, whose place was on the southeast corner of Purchase and William streets. At 59 William street was the entrance to Charles Dehn's billiard saloon, which was in the basement, and he stands in his doorway with James Welch, Jr., his clerk, beside him. At 61 and 63, Ellery G. Pierce and Isaac Cook had their restaurant and barroom. Isaac Cook stands at No. 61, bareheaded and wearing a white coat. The store at 65 William street was occupied jointly by Charles Hazeltine, dealer in pianos, and George R. Paddock, watches and clocks, whose clock sign is seen swinging in front. At 67 and 69 William, Charles E. and Frank R. Dana had their dining rooms, the business being done under the name of "Dana Brothers." On the second floor, Purchase street front, to the north, William H. H. Sisson, physician, had his office, and his sign can be seen there. Dr. Charles D. Prescott, whose sign appears on the southeast corner, occupied the office Jan. 1, 1867. On the third floor, John Davis had an office in Room 18, the sign reading, "Davis & Co., patent agents." Just north of Davis & Co.'s sign appears one of Eaton (Solomon K.) & Smith (Obed F.) architects, who had their office on this floor. George F. Wing occupied Room 16 on this floor.

The dwelling house north of the Theatre was the home of Eli Haskell. It was moved about the year 1869 to the east side of Second street, south of Elm, and is still standing.

THE MORGAN MANSION.

This patrician mansion was built by the late Charles W. Morgan in 1825. It occupied the site of the old home of Joseph Russell, who was the founder of New Bedford and the pioneer in the whale fishery. Union street follows the old cart path from Russell's home, to his try works on the shore. The new High School stands on this historic location.

THE JONATHAN BOURNE MANSION.

This mansion was located on the west side of Orchard street at the corner of Clinton. It was built by the late Jonathan Bourne in 1856, and was the only great house built here during the interval between 1856 and 1880, a trying period for New Bedford, resultant upon the financial troubles of 1857, the War of the Rebellion and a series of disasters in the Arctic. The mansion was of brick, three stories in height, the last house built here of the end chimney design of 1830. An exceptionally fine feature of this mansion was the circular staircase, rising from the ground floor to the roof.

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BLOCK ON WILLIAM STREET ON WHICH MUNICIPAL BUILDING IS NOW LOCATED. TAKEN PROBABLY IN 1852.

(See Next Page for Description.)

BLOCK ON WILLIAM STREET ON WHICH MUNICIPAL BUILDING IS NOW LOCATED. TAKEN PROBABLY IN 1852.

A reproduction of an old daguerreotype of the north side of William street, now in the possession of Louis W. Tilden, a son of the late Horace Tilden, who took the photograph. In 1852 the following were occupants of the buildings seen in this picture:—Otis Irish, who lived at No. 79 William street, had his grocery and provision store in the building at No. 81 William street, at the extreme right of the picture where only a part of the wooden awning shows the business sign "Groceries & Provisions," and Asa W. Dyer lived in the same building. James Schotchler, a chair painter, lived and had his shop at No. 83 William street, where the roof of the wooden awning has been converted into a drying place or open air show room. The next building west, where "Ready Made Coffins" appears on the east side board of the awning, Edward T. Wilson, a furniture dealer, had his store. Mr. Wilson was a brother of the late Benjamin G. Wilson, an undertaker. William H. Hussey's house was at No. 87 William street, and this building was removed in 1878 and now stands facing east at the southwest corner of William and Eighth streets. The white building at the northeast corner of Sixth and William streets, numbered 89, 91 and 93 William street, was the Crapo House, of which Ezra B. Crapo was proprietor. In the corner store was a restaurant. Mark B. Palmer occupied the house at 95 William street, where now the Young Men's Christian Association building stands, while next was the first Baptist church, a part of the tower showing in the photograph. John Girdwood was pastor in 1852.

While the city owned in 1853 the greater part of the land on which stood the Free Public Library, reconstructed within a few years as the present Municipal building, work on the Library building did not start until three years later, the corner stone being laid on Thursday, August 28, 1856, and the Library opened to the public on November 9, 1857.

OLD MARKET SQUARE.

A Bit of the Old Town Blotted Out to Provide a Location for Police Headquarters.

PURCHASE STREET IN THE TOWN CLOCK DAYS.
(From a Photograph Taken Fifty Years Ago.)

FORMER MANSION OF THOMAS R. ROBESON ON COUNTY STREET.

MANSION OF JOHN AVERY PARKER, ON COUNTY STREET.

Russell Warren was the architect of this mansion, which was regarded as the finest example in the United States of Greek temple architecture as applied to a dwelling. The mansion stood on the square south of the Common and was demolished some years ago.

UNION STREET IN THE EIGHTIES.

Many of the buildings on the north side of the street were recently destroyed by fire and otherwise the scene has altered.

NORTH CHRISTIAN CHURCH, OFTEN CALLED THE WHITE CHURCH.

This church is now in process of demolition, the tower having been removed. It stands on Purchase street at the corner of Middle street. It was built about the year 1833. Previous to the widening of Purchase street the church stood back from the line and flights of steps led to the entrance. The architect of this church was Russell Warren, the famous designer of the Colt mansion in Bristol, the old City Hall, now the Free Public Library, the Unitarian church, the John Avery Parker mansion on County street, now demolished, the old Merchants and Mechanics banks on Water street at the foot of William, and a number of old mansions.